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A N N U A L R E P O R T S O F M E D I C A L O F F I C E R O F H E A L T H

A N D S A N I T A R Y I N S P E C T O R

F O R T H E Y E A R

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BOROUGH OF NEW ROMNEY (KENT)

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF
HEALTH AND OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR
THE YEAR 1954.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report for the year 1954.

The Registrar General's estimate of the mid-year Home Population was 2,300, which represents an increase by 75 over that of the preceding year.

The number of live-births was 28, less by 11 than in the preceding year, and the birth-rate was accordingly 12.17. When adjusted by the Registrar General's comparability factor, which standardises the rate for comparison with other Districts, it becomes 12.6. This rate is low in comparison with that for England and Wales which appears to be becoming stabilised around 15. The figures are however small for statistical comparisons and small fluctuations in the number of births have a more magnifying effect on the rate than in Districts where the number of births is considerable.

It is pleasing to record that there were no still-births.

There were, however, two infant deaths, both due to prematurity which is the commonest cause of these deaths. There were no deaths due to Pregnancy, Childbirth or Abortion amongst mothers.

The number of deaths from all causes was 30 (15 males, 15 females). As in previous years, Heart, Circulatory and Vascular lesions was the highest cause, and may be regarded as a natural eventuality in that most of those deaths occurred amongst the very aged. Cancer, as expected caused the second highest number of deaths, and there was one death from Cancer of the Lung. The other deaths were miscellaneous and there was no unusual grouping.

There was no death due to the Infectious Diseases, in relation to which modern methods of prevention and treatment are highly successful.

Fifty-five cases of Whooping Cough were notified. This is one of the Infectious Diseases, which like Measles, is very difficult to control owing to the fact that it is most highly infectious before it is usually suspected by the parents, that is before the typical 'Whoop' occurs. It is to be hoped that the claims made by manufacturers that the new vaccines being produced are effective immunising agents will be substantiated and that immunisation will take a routine place beside Diphtheria immunisation in the Infant Welfare Clinics and in the Doctor's Surgeries.

There was also an outbreak of Infective Hepatitis or Jaundice which is not a notifiable disease either by Practitioners or Headteachers, although it may cause considerable inconvenience in the School and in the Home. The outbreak was centred in the New Romney Primary School where seven children presented Jaundice from the 27th February to the 8th March and having regard to the estimated

long incubation period, it would appear that those children were infected from a common source about the same time. Six of those initial seven cases went home daily for their meals and it may be inferred that the School Canteen was not the original source of infection. Also the School Milk was adequately pasteurised and the mains water supply was chlorinated at the source. From about the 10th February to 17th February, the outside W.C.'s were frozen during an exceptionally severe cold spell and flushing was done by a hand-bucket; in those conditions it would be more difficult to keep the W.C.'s thoroughly cleansed. If it is assumed that the incubation period is about 30 days, then it is improbable that the virus was initially propagated from this source, but those conditions would be very favourable to the infection of the subsequent cases which occurred. Correlated also was the fact that according to the Standards for School Premises Regulations, 1951, which prescribe standards for new Schools, the number of W.C.'s was 50% deficient for girls and 25% for boys. Also the number of hand-basins for boys and girls together was approximately 75% deficient; these were also placed inconveniently to the W.C.'s, so that routine hand-washing after toilet and before meals was difficult to enforce.

Apart from the probability of the spread of infection from the W.C.'s, there was also the probability of droplet spray infection in the class-rooms, particularly in the infant class which was overcrowded and in which the epidemic began. The outbreak dragged on until February 1955 and in all approximately 50 cases had occurred in the school and as far as could be ascertained about 30 additional cases in the district.

The insufficiency of W.C.'s and hand-basins was remedied during holiday closure as far as the inconvenient and out-moded structural design of the buildings would allow and having regard to this, may now be regarded as being fairly satisfactory. The overcrowding was also relieved by the provision of a hutment for additional class-rooms. No further cases have occurred since February 1955.

At the end of the year, an investigation, sponsored by the Medical Research Council and the University of Cambridge and headed by Dr. B. P. Marmion regarding the endemicity or prevalence of Q fever in the Marsh, was completed. It was conclusively proved by serological (blood) tests that infection by *R. burnetii* (causal organism of Q fever) is prevalent amongst sheep in the Marsh and in several instances the *Rickettsiae* were isolated from the placentae of the sheep during the lambing season, when the infection is most likely to be propagated to man. Although the *Rickettsiae* cause no disease or illness in sheep as far as is known, they cause the illness in man known as Q fever, of which the most serious complication is atypical pneumonia. The disease per se is not usually dangerous to life and treatment with the modern antibiotics is highly successful. Cases occur sporadically, particularly during the lambing season, and do not reach epidemic proportions but the illness should be kept in mind when an atypical pneumonia is diagnosed and blood may be sent about the fourth week after onset to the Q Fever Laboratory, Department of Pathology, University of Cambridge for serological confirmation of the diagnosis.

It is very satisfying that no new cases of Respiratory or Non-respiratory Tuberculosis were notified and that there is no reservoir of infection in the Borough. There was

only one death. The fact that there was no case of Bovine Tuberculosis is evidence that the milk supplies in the Borough have been safe throughout the year.

In conclusion, I wish to thank you for your interest and assistance and also the staff for their efficient co-operation.

Your obedient Servant,

J. MARSHALL.

SECTION A.

STATISTICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT

FOR 1954

Area:- 1,509 acres.

Registrar-General's Estimate of:-

The Resident Population	...	...	...	2,300
Number of Inhabited Houses According to the Rate Books	...	...	...	£928
Rateable Value:-	...	...	...	£20,747
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	£80

Social Conditions

The ancient and historical Cinque Port Borough of New Romney, is today predominately an Agricultural District. There are also within the Borough, the workshops of the Romney, Hythe, Dymchurch Light Railway and a few small factories. Part of the boundary is formed by the sea at Littlestone where there are wide expanses of sand which attract many summer visitors and holiday-makers. There is almost no unemployment, if any, and social conditions may generally be regarded as being satisfactory.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS

		<u>Total</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>		<u>New Romney Borough</u>	<u>England and Wales</u>
1.	Live Births	28	14	14	Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population	12.17	15.2
	(a) Legitimate	27	13	14			
	(b) Illegitimate	1	1	-			
2.	Stillbirths						
	(a) Legitimate	-	-	-	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	-	24.0
3.	Deaths	30	15	15	Death rate per 1,000 resident population	13.04	11.3
4.	Deaths from Pregnancy, Child- birth and Abortion	-	-	-	Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births	-	Un- known
5.	Deaths of Infants under One Year of Age	2	1	1			
	(a) Legitimate	2	1	1			
	(b) Illegitimate	-	-	-			
	Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births					71.43	25.5
	Rate re legitimate infants					74.07	
	Rate re illegitimate infants					-	
6.	Deaths from Cancer (all ages)				...	...	5
	Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)				...	...	-
	Deaths from Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea.						1
	Deaths from Measles				...	...	-

The following cases of Infectious Diseases were notified during the year 1954.

Acute Primary or Influenzal Pneumonia	5
Whooping Cough	55
Measles	1
Scarlet Fever	1
Erysipelas	2

CAUSES OF DEATH IN NEW ROMNEY BOROUGH DURING

1954

ALL CAUSES				<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
				15	15
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	1	-
2.	Tuberculosis, other	...	...	-	-
3.	Syphilitic disease	...	...	-	-
4.	Diphtheria	...	...	-	-
5.	Whooping Cough	...	...	-	-
6.	Meningococcal infections	...	...	-	-
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	-	-
8.	Measles	...	...	-	-
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	-	-
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...	...	-	-
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	...	...	1	-
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	-	1
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	-	-
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	2	1
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	-	-
16.	Diabetes	...	...	-	-
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	1	2
18.	Coronary disease, angina	...	...	2	4
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	...	...	-	-
20.	Other heart disease	...	...	2	3
21.	Other circulatory disease	...	...	1	-
22.	Influenza	...	...	-	1
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	-	1
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	1	-
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	-	-
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	-	-
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	1	-
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	-	-
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	1	-
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	-	-
31.	Congenital malformations	...	...	-	-
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	2	2
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	-	-
34.	All other accidents	...	...	-	-
35.	Suicide	...	...	-	-
36.	Homicide and operations of war	...	...	-	-

Immunisation against Diphtheria, 1954

The following is a return of the number of children under the age of 15 years on 31st December, 1954, who had completed a course of immunisation at any time before that date (i.e., at any time since 1st January, 1940).

Year of Birth	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	Total
Last complete course of injections (whether primary or booster) 1950 - 1954	5	3	17	28	19	30	38	34	46	48	29	42	30	26	5	400
1949 or earlier	21	22	11	7	8	-	2	2	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	81

Immunisation against Diphtheria and Vaccination against Smallpox, 1954.

(A) <u>Diphtheria Immunisation</u>	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	Total
<u>Year of Birth</u>																
Primary Inoculations	5	24	3	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35
Re-inforcing Inoculations	-	-	-	-	2	28	10	-	4	2	1	17	-	-	-	64
(B) <u>Vaccination</u>																
Primary Vaccination	7	10	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Before 1940 18
Re-Vaccination	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	4

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality, 1954

Age Periods	<u>New Cases</u>		<u>Deaths</u>		<u>Total cases on Register</u>	
	Respiratory		Respiratory		Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
...	-	-	-	-	4	2
0	-	-	-	-	6	-
1	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	-	-	-	-	-	-
35	-	-	-	-	-	-
45	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 and upwards	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	-	-	1	-	-	-

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SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. Water Supply

This is supplied by the Folkestone Water Company incorporating the Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Company. The water is derived from shallow wells at Dungeness and is subject to constant chlorination.

Samples are taken at intervals for bacteriological examination and have been found to be satisfactory in all cases.

2. Sewers and Sewage Disposal

Approximately one third of the property in the Borough is connected to the main drainage system, the remainder operate on cesspools.

Generally the sewers and sewage disposal system have operated satisfactorily. A considerable amount of surface water finds its way into the sewers by reason of defective pipes and the fact that fall pipes taking roof water are connected direct to the foul water drains. It will be seen that until a survey is made and these faults remedied this trouble will continue.

3. Refuse Disposal and Salvage

The Corporation undertakes the removal and disposal of house refuse, a comprehensive service is provided, and refuse is collected weekly. Adequate disposal facilities are available in disused gravel quarries on the Dymchurch Road.

4. Salvage

Salvage collection continues and baled paper is regularly forwarded to the paper mills.

5. Cesspool Emptying

This service is carried out by the Corporation and commencing on the 1st April of this year a charge of 8/0d. per load was made in respect of all loads taken from premises above a maximum of 15 free loads in the year. The charge does not apply to licensed premises where conveniences are open to the public at all times. A proportional allowance is made where two or more premises are served by one cesspool.

The 800 gallon Bedford vehicle continues to give satisfactory service

Cesspools emptied	2,398
Total amount of sewage disposed of	3,070,500

6. Factories and Work Places

Inspections were made of the factories and work places in the Borough. The following table gives details of the of the inspections made during 1954:-

FACTORY ACTS, 1937 & 1948

	<u>No. on Register</u>	<u>Inspections</u>
Factories in which Section 1 to 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	6	8
Factories not included in the above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority. (Sanitary Accommodation)	10	12
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority. (Sanitary Accommodation)	-	-
	16	20

7. Food Shops and Food Preparing Places

Constant visits are made to premises used for the preparation or sale of food; 17 premises are registered and are used for the sale of ice-cream.

8. Rodent Control

Treatment of premises for rat and mice infestations is carried out by the part-time rodent operator. Private premises are treated free and a charge covering operating costs is made to business premises.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949

	<u>Local Authority.</u>	<u>Dwell- ing Houses</u>	<u>Agricul- tural</u>	<u>All other (including business premises)</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total No. of properties in Local Authority's District.	5	966	2	92	1065
No. of properties inspected by Local Authority during 1954.					
(a) notification ...	-	46	1	10	57
(b) survey or otherwise ...	5	101	1	22	129
No. of properties inspected which were infested by rats. (Major)	-	3	-	1	4
(Minor)	-	40	1	3	44
No. of properties inspected which were seriously infested by mice.	-	12	-	1	13
No. of infested properties treated by Local Authority.	1	55	1	5	62

10. Dairies and Milk Shops

Two retailers are licensed for the sale of designated milk in the Borough. Samples have been taken during the year for bacteriological examination and have been found satisfactory.

11. Housing

The number of dwelling houses in the Borough is 934. Houses provided during the year:-

Council houses	14
Private houses	18

	32

12. Summary of Sanitary Inspector's Visits during the year.

<u>Nature of visit or inspection</u>	<u>No. of inspections</u>
Water supply	5
Drainage	140
Stables and Piggeries	3
Tents, vans and sheds	43
Factories	40
Public Conveniences	48
Refuse collection	10
Refuse disposal	24
Rats and mice	18
Schools	4
Shops	32

Inspections made under the Public Health Acts

Inspection of meat

Visits to slaughterhouses	4
Visits to shops and stalls	28

Visits to:-

Butchers	30
Grocers	10
Greengrocers	4
Dairies	4
Ice Cream premises	16
Restaurants	4

Visits in connection with sampling

Milk - bacteriological	2
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13. Food Inspection

No action was necessary for the sale of unsound food during the year. The following food-stuffs were condemned after inspection requested by the food traders:-

158 lbs. beef	4 tins meat
7 " mutton	5 tins fish
104 " pork	29 tins fruit
4 tins vegetables	5 tins evaporated milk.

14. Caravan Sites

One licensed site for 135 caravans has been established in the Greatstone area and is generally satisfactory.

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
No. killed	1	1	-	21	41
No. inspected	1	1	-	21	41
<u>All diseases except tuberculosis</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	1
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	5%
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	-

